

## A NAME IN THE SAND.

Alone I walked the moonlit strand,  
I gazed and gazed, and saw the sand  
My footprints made as I went on,  
And thought how soon I'd be no more,  
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## REFLECTIONS and REPENTANCE

BY ERIC W. SARGENT

Bennington looked after Lucy Alton's retreating form with amazement. Only the night before she had promised that she would marry him in the spring and had sealed the bargain with a kiss. She had been tender and loving then.

This morning she walked past him with an air that she was aware of his presence and a haughty "Brr!" when he had raised his hat in salutation.

The more Bennington thought it over the more inexplicable it became. He said Lucy had been more than friends for a couple of years. She had so clearly shown her preference for his society that he had sought to dispute his position.

He could imagine no rival who might have poisoned her mind against him in so brief a time as had elapsed since the night before. He posited his brain until it whirled, but still no satisfactory explanation presented itself.

Then he decided upon a very foolish action. He left town.

Not even his most intimate friends knew where he had gone, and for several weeks the air in which he moved was the matter of further thought.

As for Bennington, he was seeking to dispel his ennui in Paris, and only succeeded in discovering that any capital to be a most disappointing place. A week later he was arguing with the customs officials on the familiar pier in New York.

His man was too well trained to exhibit any surprise when his master walked in. He silently placed a huge pile of letters upon the library table and went out to attend to the trunk.

Bennington turned the letters over listlessly. Suddenly he gave a start. There was one little square envelope addressed in a handwriting, the sight of which made his heart beat faster. He tore it open.

"Dear Jack," it ran, "what has become of you? It is not like you, but I have seen a change in this short time. Have you already repented your proposal? I don't like to think that. Come in, Jack, and tell me what the trouble is. I did so want to see you last night."

It was signed "Lucy," and bore a date one day later than his experience on the evening.

A second note was in Mr. Alton's handwriting. This was dated a week later, in vigorous terms her father told Bennington what he thought of his actions.

"I learn that you are abroad, sir," he wrote. "I should advise you to remain there. I cannot be responsible for the consequences should we meet."

If Lucy's letter had been a puzzle, this was even less understandable. There was no mistaking the old deed he had received. In the face of that, why should she write a day later, as though nothing had happened, and why should her father brand him as a scoundrel and a cad?

The simplest way to find out would be to drive around to the Altons. He called a cab and in ten minutes he was before Lucy's door.

He found her sitting in the parlor, looking up at him with a look of surprise. "What a lovely day!" she said, "I had just been thinking of you."

"Are you sure you will never make the same mistake again?"

"I assure you that it will not happen again," he declared earnestly.

He sought to take her in his arms, but she shrank away from him, and a voice from the parlor cried out: "Come here, Jack! I don't mind your making love to Mabel if you think it's no—but I draw the line at Lucy!"

"Mabel?" he asked. "Mr. Bennington, he pleaded. "Mr. Alton is not

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"See here, Julian," persisted Bennington hotly, "what's the matter? Why should the excitement kill Mr. Alton? What have I done?"

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"I'm sure I don't know anything," declared Julian respectfully. "Only Mr. Alton declared that you were not to see Miss Alton, and Dr. Sommers ordered me to be careful that Mr. Alton did not see you. I am very sorry, sir."

There was a slight pause, and before he could gather his senses Bennington found himself outside the closed door.

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